How does community crisis & natural disaster affect children?

Children’s reactions to natural disasters can vary greatly and may appear immediately after the event or they may arise over the weeks following the event.

Reactions vary according to a child’s developmental stage.

Children 5 years and under are unable to protect themselves and as a result can experience feelings of fear and anxiety. Children of this age are strongly affected by their parents’ reactions.

Children 6 and 11 years are able to understand loss and permanent change and can experience high levels of anxiety as a result. Children in this age group can experience regressive behaviours, anger outbursts, physical complaints and concentration difficulties.

Young people 12 and 18 years may have reactions similar to those of adults including flashbacks, avoidance, loss of interest, anger, feeling sad, and difficulties concentrating.

Most children will adapt and grow through traumatic experiences with care and support from family, friends and teachers. If your child is experiencing severe reactions that have continued for more than a few days or if less severe reactions have continued for a period of more than six weeks you may need to consider seeking professional help.

If you would like to speak with someone about your child’s reactions or would like to make an appointment for your child to see a counsellor please call UnitingCare Community on 4153 8400.

ABANDONED CAR PICKUP

Flood affected property & vehicle owners impacted by flooding are being asked to contact one of the local metal recycling companies to remove any unwanted, unregistered or uninsured vehicles that have been flood affected, particularly on Council land, roads or footpaths.

Health and Regulatory Services portfolio spokesperson, Cr. Wayne Honor, said Council is trying to work with owners to help remove flood affected vehicles from Council controlled land where owners can be identified.

“Vehicles that appear to be abandoned, unattended, or in hazardous locations, and where Council officers cannot readily identify the owner of the vehicle, will need to be impounded,” he said.

Council is encouraging owners to contact one of the local metal recycling companies listed in the yellow pages to recycle the metal where possible.

“Some of these companies are not charging towing rates and in some cases offering the owner approximately $80 for the average size vehicle,” said Cr. Honor.
The Department of Communities, Child Safety & Disability Services (DCCSDS) is responsible for coordinating community recovery activities.

Community Recovery Centre:

**BUNDABERG TAFE**

Entrance via Faldt Street

Seven days, 9am to 5pm

A Community Recovery Centre gives immediate help to people after a disaster and provides information on available grants and referrals to other services.

Note: This centre will be closed over the weekend of Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 March. It will re-open Monday 11 March.

To make an appointment for a visit by a Community Recovery staff member or to find out further information about assistance, please contact the Community Recovery Hotline on **1800 173 349**.

The Department of Housing and Public Works provides housing assistance to low to moderate income families and individuals. Should you require housing assistance please contact the Bundaberg Housing Service Centre on (07) 4131 5990 or free call **1800 809 835**.

Temporary housing may be available for families or individuals affected by the recent floods.

You can also contact the Housing Hot Line on **1800 004 495** should you require further assistance or advice.

**RED CROSS**

Bundaberg region residents badly affected by the recent floods can now access funds donated by the general public to help their recovery from the disaster.

Payments of up to $2000 per adult are available now and have already begun to be distributed to eligible people who have applied for assistance to the Queensland Floods Appeal 2013.

Independent Distribution Committee Chair Terry Mackenroth said application forms are available from local recovery centres or the appeal website at [www.queenslandfloodsappeal2013.org.au](http://www.queenslandfloodsappeal2013.org.au) or by calling **1800 901 933**.

“Our focus is on getting help to those in the Bundaberg region that need it most as quickly as possible,” Mr Mackenroth said.

Non-means tested payments on offer for eligible claimants are $2000 per adult and $1000 per dependent child (under 18).

Mr Mackenroth said applications had to be in by 18 March 2013 and flood victims would be eligible if the following has occurred:

- **their principal place of residence was damaged in the floods, regardless of whether the property was owned or rented (e.g. a house, unit, caravan or other dwelling), and**

- **the damaged residence was flooded internally above the level of the floor in the living areas (e.g. lounge room, rumpus, dining room, kitchen or bedrooms) making the dwelling uninhabitable, or**

- **structural damage, making the dwelling uninhabitable during high winds**

**GLOBAL CARE BUNDABERG**

(ASSISTANCE WITH GROCERIES)

Global Care Bundaberg operates a low cost grocery warehouse every Thursday from 9am to 11am at Citicoast Church, located at 140 Elliott Heads Rd.

For those who have been affected by the recent flooding and tornados, Global Care are also able to assist with grocery and personal items to help them get back on their feet. Flood recovery opening times are 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday.